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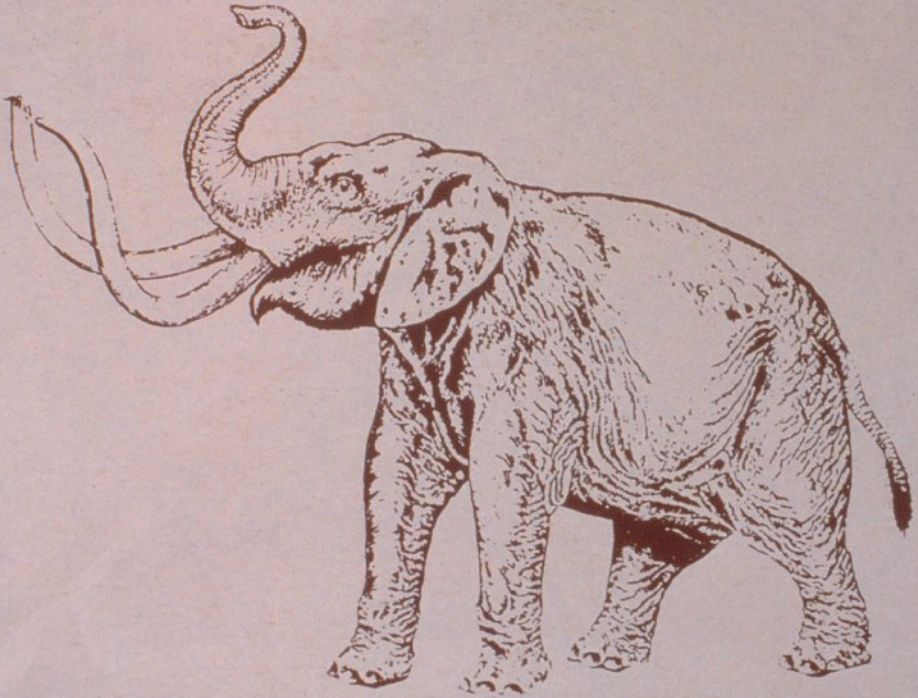
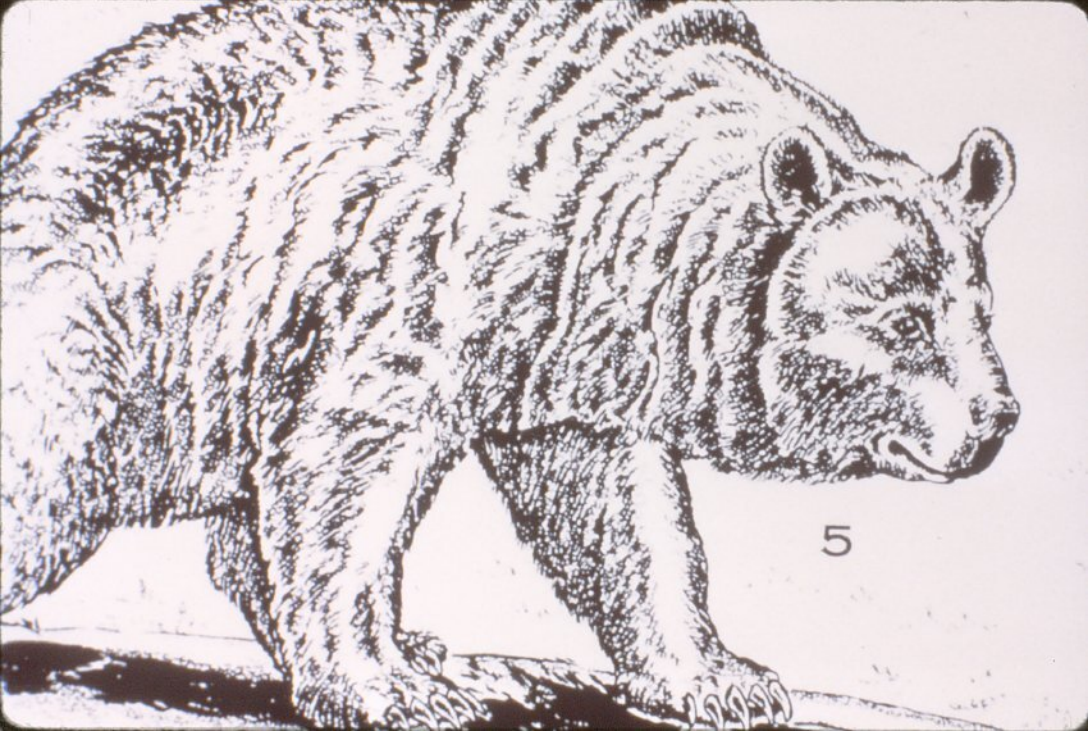
THE SABERCAT

TETRAMERYX IRVINGTONENSIS

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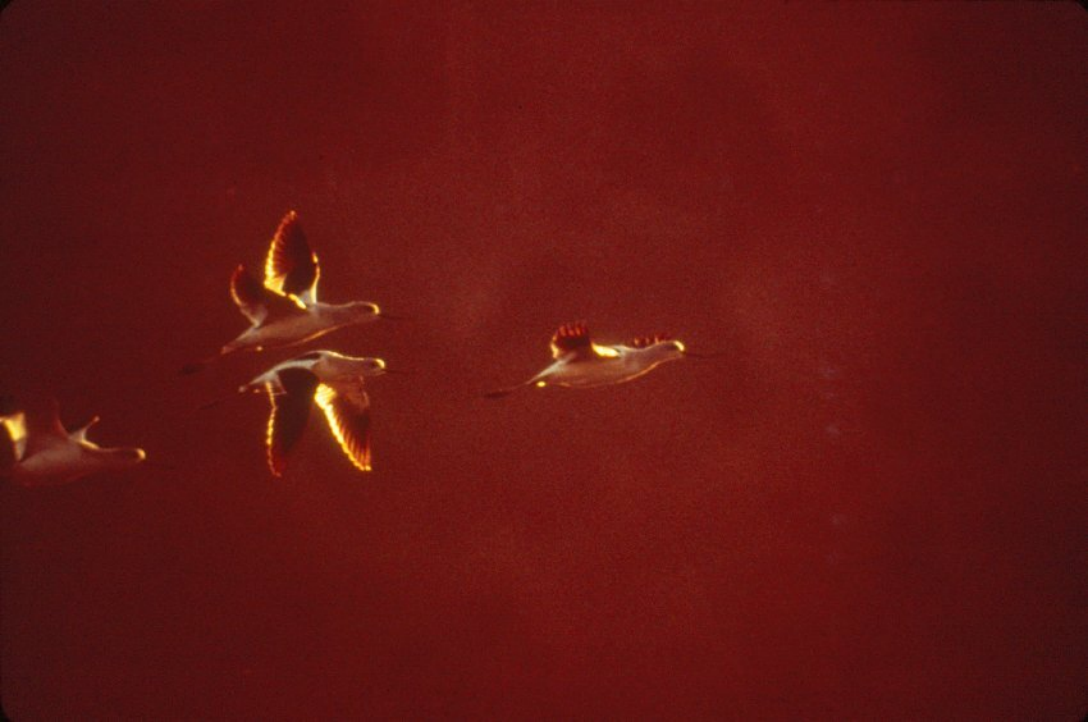
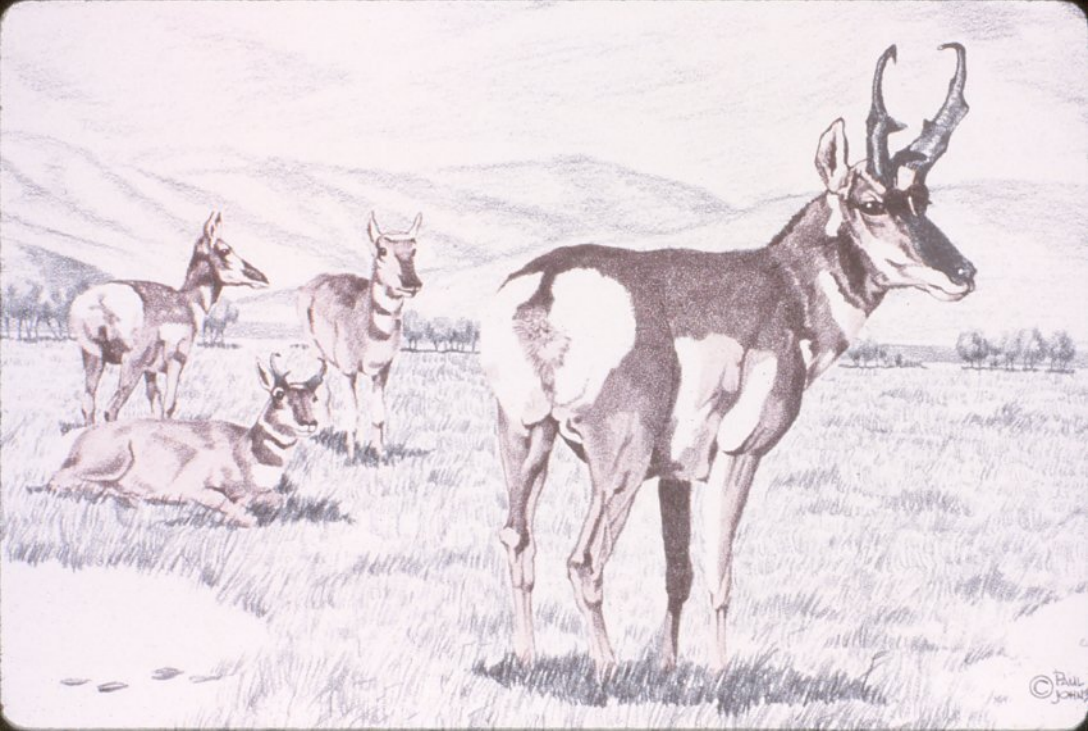
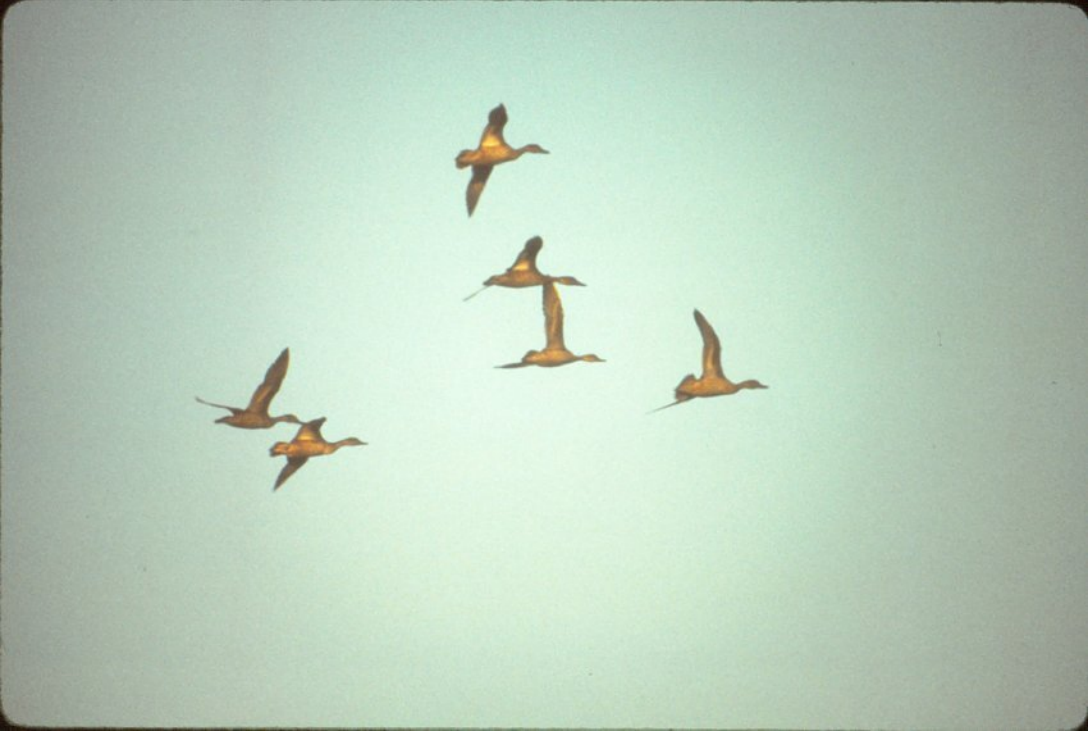
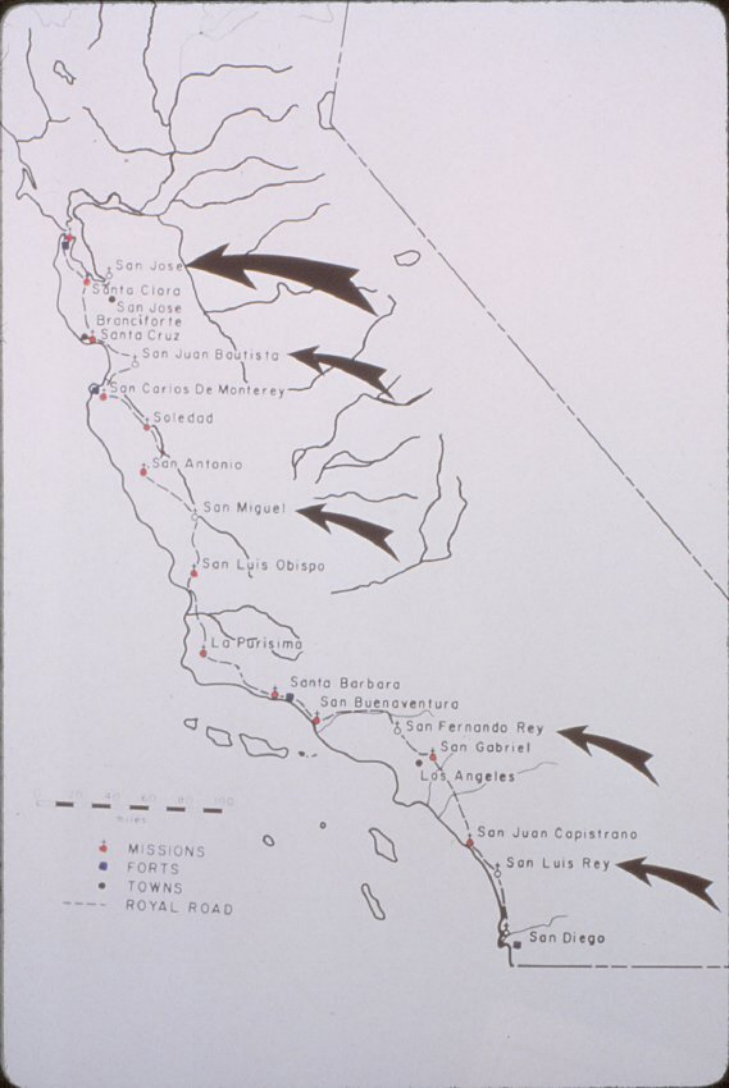



©Paul Johns

Michael Harnett



fr. fermin francisco de lasuen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San Carlos De Monterey
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Santa Barbara
San Buenaventura
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Los Angeles
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TOWNS
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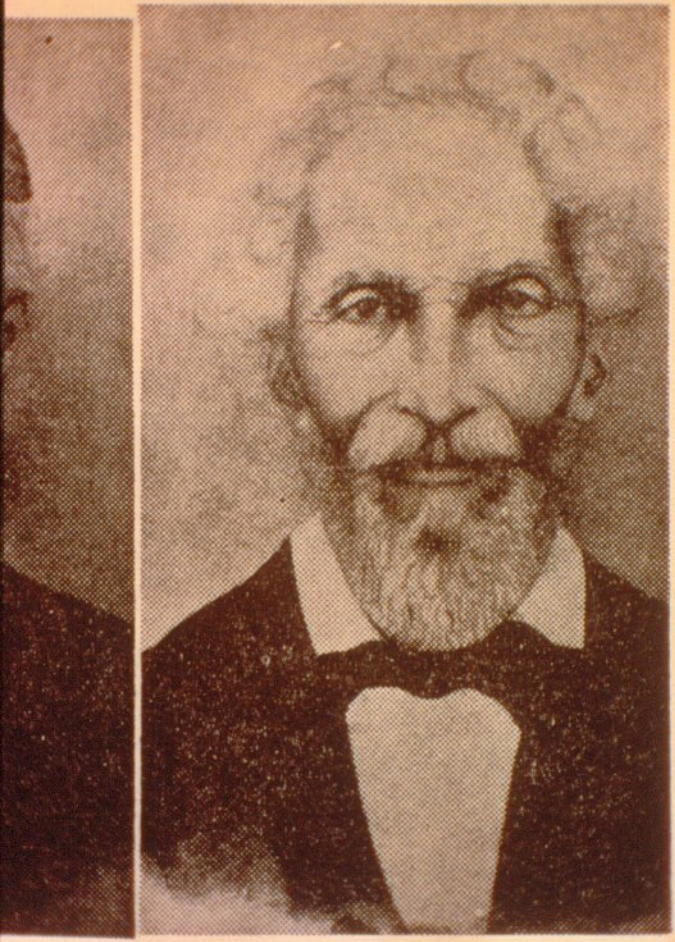

rantee Fulgencio Higuera, owner of

MEXICAN LAND GRANTS
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CONTRA COSTA
ALAMEDA
SANTA CLARA
SANTA CRUZ
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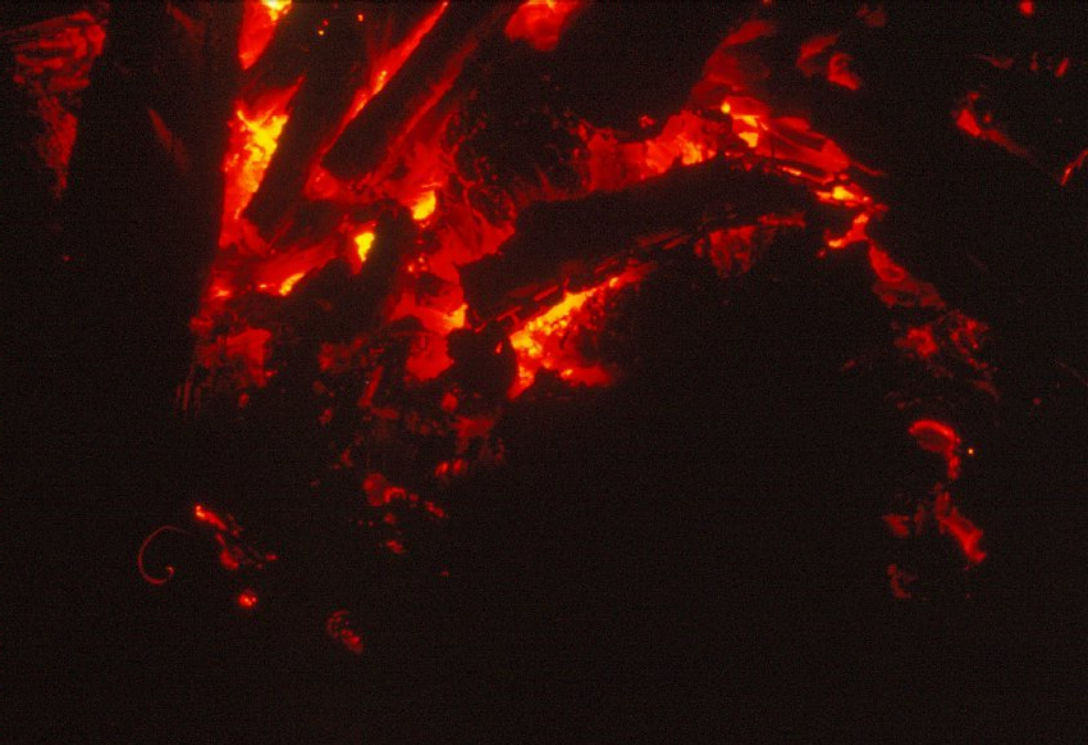
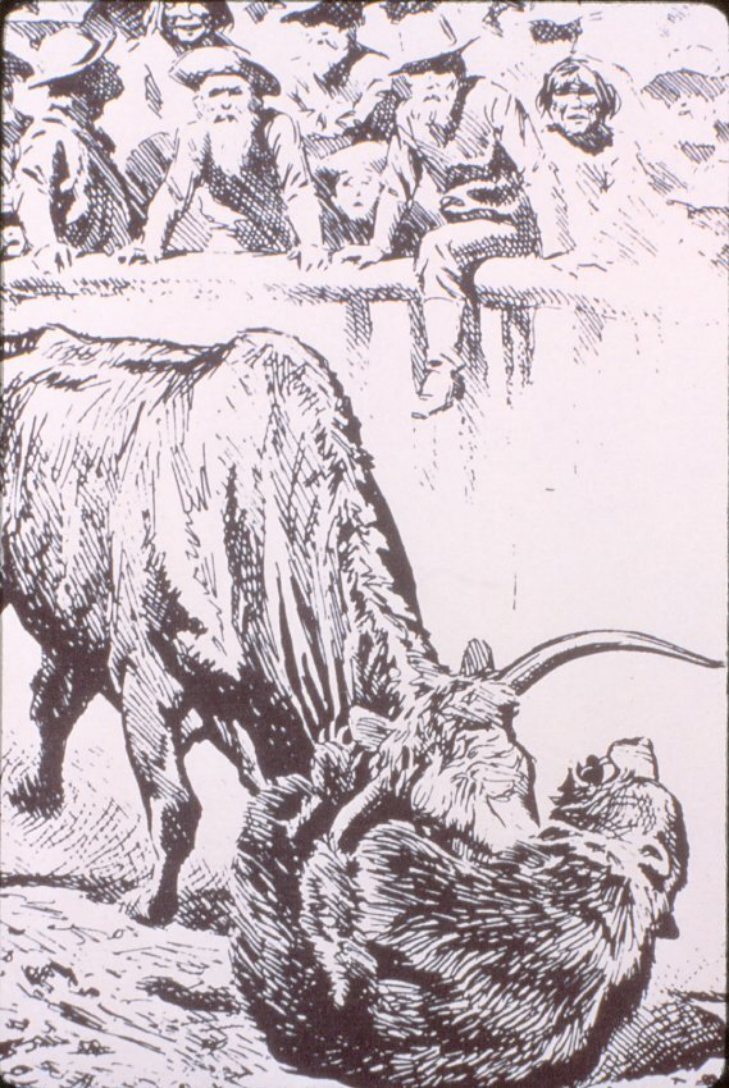
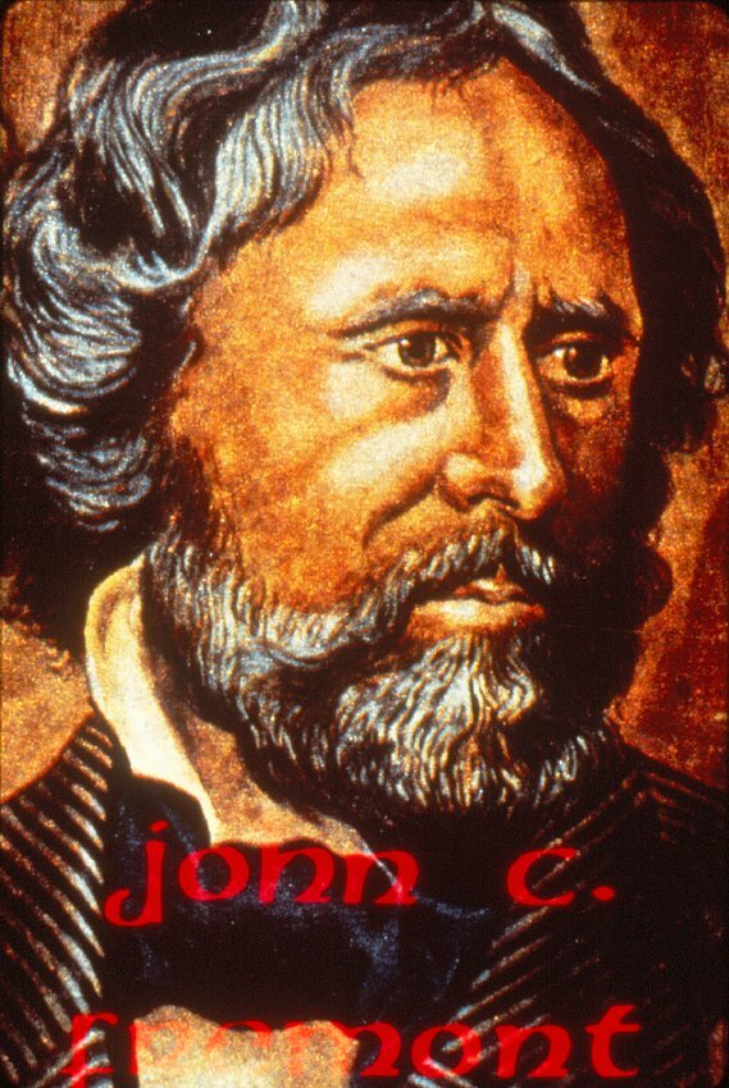
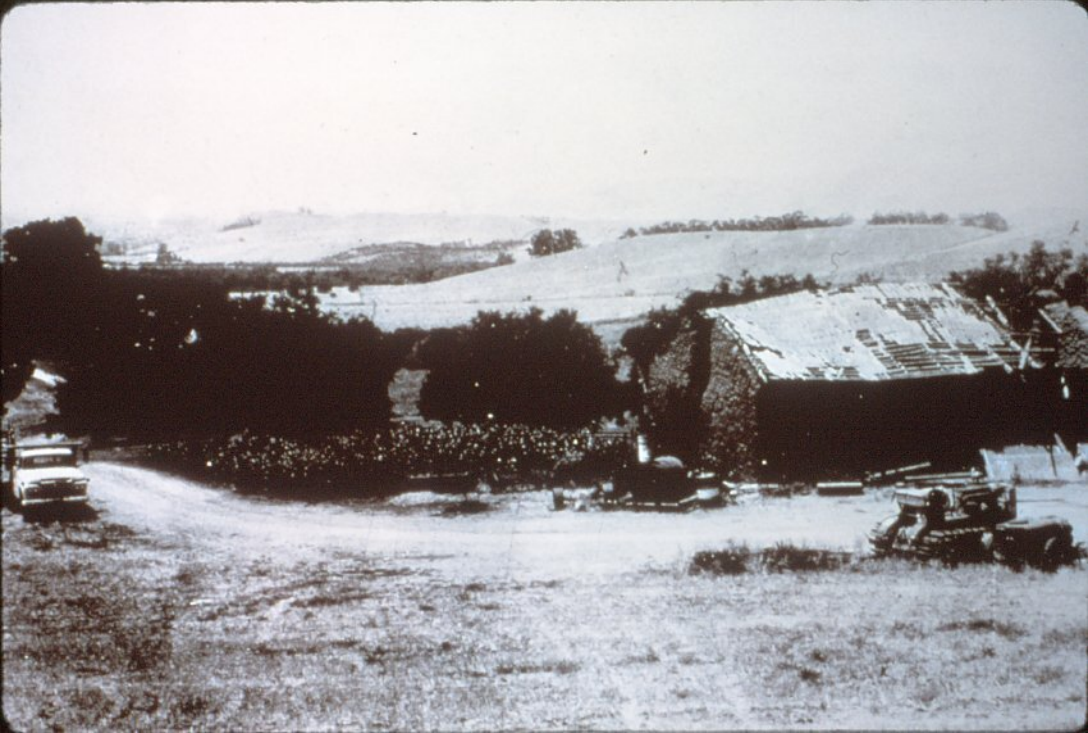
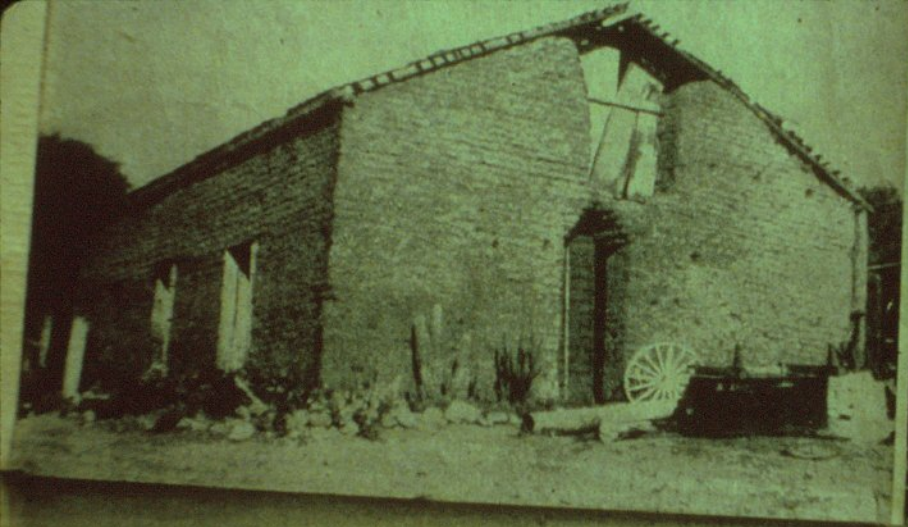





John C.
Fremont

Mission Creek
Mission Creek
Mission San José
Oklone Indian Cemetery
CORNERO
Mission Peak
Agua Caliente Creek (Warm Spring Creek)
GALINDA
HIGUERA
ADOBE
Agua Fria Creek (Cold Spring Creek)
RANCHO DEL AGUA CALIENTE
Warm Springs Landing
Toroges Creek
Scotts Ravine
Scott Creek (Lone Tree Creek)





Eduardo Higuera, son of Eugencio, built this adobe in the 1840s. It still stands in a foothill canyon about one mile east of Warm Springs off the Curtner Road, fairly well preserved without the aid of modern minds.

Photo Collection of Mrs. Pearl Soberanes

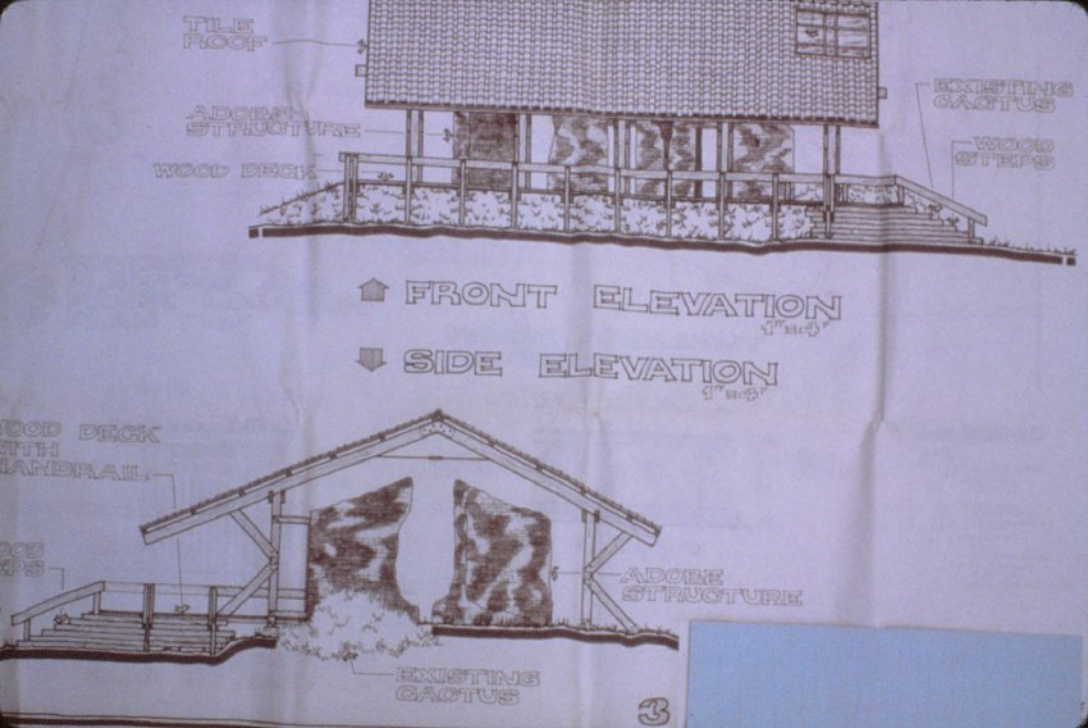
In 1864 Francisco Solano A... on Santa Rita Rancho [illegible]

OAKLAND TRIBUNE, MONDAY MARCH 30, 1953
FREMONT LIBRARY

News Register June 24, 1967

HIGUERA ADOBE IN WARM SPRINGS, 1969 PHOTO

High in the quiet foothills of Warm Springs, with a panoramic


TILE ROOF
ADOBE STRUCTURE
WOOD DECK
EXISTING CACTUS
WOOD STEPS
FRONT ELEVATION
SIDE ELEVATION
ADOBE STRUCTURE
EXISTING CACTUS

FORD

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MEDIA CENTER
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FREMONT, CA
94538

2008.58.31

THE GALINDO-HIGUERA ADOBE: A PERSPECTIVE

1. The Galindo-Higuera Adobe: A Perspective

2. Cycling through unimaginable reaches of space.

3. One star among millions: The Sun.

4. And one of its tiny planets: The Earth.

5. And from the unimaginable depths of time came the outline which slowly rose from the ocean floor to become Fremont's special landmark, Mission Peak.

6. Millions of years before the name of Fremont was thought or spoken, this outline became fixed almost exactly as we now see it.

7. On its slopes, Smilodon, the saber-toothed king of beasts, stalked giant sloths.

8. The four-pronged antelope, Tetremeryx Irvingtonensis,

9. Grazed near gargantuan Columbian Mammoths,

10. And a species of bear 14 feet tall prowled the countryside.

11. Much, much later, but still before the memory of man, hosts of migrating birds darkened the sky. Their wing beats produced a deafening roar.

12. The eagle, the hawk, the kite, and the condor flourished.

13. Elk with 8 foot antlers stood their stately watch as herds of antelope grazed.

14. Steelhead salmon teemed in nearby streams.

15. Whales spouted in the bay.

16. And the Grizzly was the closest thing to a king in this land.

17. Then came Man. Waves of wanderers migrated into the Bay Area over thousands of years and decided to stay.

18. For centuries these Ohlones followed the cycles of seasons through the land within sight of Mission Peak from one harvest to the next.

19. They traveled about their tiny tribelets' territories reaping the bounties of shellfish from the sea,

20. Salmon from the rivers,

21. Ducks and geese from the marshes,

22. Acorns from the oak groves,

23. And a wide variety of seeds, roots, and greens from the meadows tucked away on the hillsides.

24. A good many acorns were ground in the stone mortars found on the slopes of Mission Peak.

25. These Stone-Age people successfully struck a harmonious balance with nature during the thousands of years they lived here. Their economy was founded on the principle of sharing rather than on competition.

26. The Ohlones were a peaceful people who had a strong sense of family and community.

27. Meanwhile all members of the society were encouraged to exercise artistic creativity in making objects for daily use.

28. And, finally, these so-called primitives felt deeply the mystery of the world's spirit.

29. But still there was no king. The tribelet's chief embodied a way of government that could serve its subjects, but not oppress them.

30. Then came the King, by name, Charles III, by the Grace of God, King of Castile, of Leon, of Aragon, of Navarre, of Granada, of Toledo, of Valencia, of Galicia, of Seville, of Cordoba, of Gibralter, of the Isles of the Canaries, of the Indies, Eastern and Western, of the Isles and terra firma of the Ocean Sea, etc., etc.

31. And now, through the efforts of a handful of his devoted, hard-fighting and hard-travelling conquistadors and clerics, king also of Alta California.

32. The actual intrusion of the King's men into the Ohlone's land had been a long time coming. From the time of its discovery in 1542 by the sea-farers under command of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo,

33. More than 200 years elapsed before Portola's scout, Sergeant Ortega, passed through in 1769 in an attempt to find a way around the barrier formed by the Golden Gate. Col. Juan Bautista de Anza located sites for Mission San Francisco de Asis and Mission Santa Clara in 1776. During this expedition he also explored the Contra Costa, as the Spaniards called the East Bay Region. Twenty years later hardly another Spaniard, soldier, or cleric had even entered the area.

34. But finally Father Lasuen, successor of Father Serra, conceived a vast project to build 5 missions simultaneously to bolster the mission chain.

35. Mission San Jose would be one of those five. Accordingly, in November of 1795 Governor Diego de Borica signed the order to locate a site in the "Alameda." The "Alameda" was the name given the fertile plain across which the Alameda Creek issues from Niles Canyon on its way to the Bay. By May of 1797 a mere 18 months later, 10 missionaries who would man the various missions arrived in Monterey. Preparations were begun to occupy the sites. The Ohlone Era was rapidly coming to an end.

36. The Very Rev. Father President Fermin Francisco de Lasuen himself presided at the dedication of Mission San Jose very early on the morning of June 11, 1797, the Feast of the Most Holy Trinity. Sergeant Pedro Amador led the troop of soldiers required by the occasion. The names of several of these are recognizable as founders of prominent Californio families. Besides Sgt. Amador, Corporal Alejo Miranda, Hermenegildo Bohorquez, Juan Francisco Flores, Francisco Soto, Luis and Crisanto Peralta, and Bartolomeo Pacheco.

37. One of the soldiers present that historic day, Jose Loreto Higuera, fathered, in 1799, Fulgencio Francisco Higuera, who would grow up to become the owner by 1840 of the Rancho del Agua Caliente.

38. This Mexican Land Grant of more than 9500 acres was located on the flanks of Mission Peak and included within its boundaries the Warm Springs that for generations had been a source of pleasure and convenience to the missionaries and prior generations of Ohlones.

39. Of seven adobe homes known to have been built on this rancho, only one remains: The Galindo-Higuera Adobe located on the Rancho Higuera Historical Park.

40. It was probably built around 1840. The actual builder remains anonymous, but might have been Fulgencio himself, or his father, or one of his 13 children or even Antonio Sunol, who owned the grant briefly before Fulgencio.

41. Records dating as early as 1842 associate a distant relative, Juan Crisostomo Galindo, with the area and the adobe and suggest that he could also have been the builder.

42. Whoever the builder, he built it to provide shelter, cool in the summer, warm and dry in the winter, for a Mexican family. Its 2-foot thick walls made of the earth, and hardened by the sun are excellent for this purpose.

43. First and foremost this adobe was home, possibly to a lot of people, since families were often large. For instance, recall that Fulgencio Higuera had 13 children.

44. It was not likely a richly furnished home. A table, a few chairs, chests to store valuables.

45. A couple of beds downstairs, more upstairs for the children. All these things were handmade of wood and rawhide.

46. Hand-dipped tallow candles provided light.

47. There was no indoor kitchen. The cooking was done outside over an open fire. The cook was sheltered a bit from sun and rain by a ramada made of branches.

48. Despite what may sound like a drab existence, the adobe undoubtedly saw its share of fandangos,

49. And even bull and bear fights, two popular events of ranchero days.

50. In 1846, only a few years after the adobe was built, men like John C. Fremont effected the American Occupation of California through the force of arms.

51. The Gold Rush crashed down on the Californios hardly 3 years later speeding the pace of life irreversably.

52. Through this turmoil it took Higuera until 1857 to have his title to the land confirmed by a patent granted by the United States.

53. The vast tracts of land held by the rancheros were rapidly broken into smaller units. The Rancho del Agua Caliente was no exception. When the adobe was built, it stood on a 9500 acre rancho. Now it sits on a 20 acre park.

54. No one knows how long the adobe served as a home, but by the early 1900's when Mr. Joe Silva's family rented the property from the Curtners, it was being used for storage.

55. A hay barn had been added to the east end, and the back wall had been covered with wood to protect it from the winter rains blown by the southwind.

56. The Silvas were dairy farmers and had a farm house and this milk barn near the adobe.

57. Some years later during the 1930's and 40's the Goularte family grew fruit on the premises and dried apricots inside the adobe.

58. The orchard was a short lived experiment, because the deer ate too much of the fruit.

59. During this era also, corn covered the hillsides below the adobe.

60. After the Goulartes left the ranch, the adobe was still used for storage, but mostly it was neglected and its roof gradually deteriorated.

61. On January 23, 1956 Warm Springs incorporated with Mission San Jose, Niles, Irvington, and Centerville to become the City of Fremont.

62. The old building, weathered and decaying, presided over all this from its hillside perch.

63. In 1960 the Historical Resources Commission of the new city designated the structure a primary historic resource, but the building continued to return to the earth from which it was made.

64. In 1970 volunteers erected the first of three temporary roofs of canvas and plastic suspended from telephone poles.

65. Eventually Ohlone College Archeology classes studied the ruin. And nature continued to wash the mud from its walls.

66. For nearly 20 years the tide of housing developments swept over the flatlands and finally up the hills to where the proud old ruin stood.

67. Land development proposals came and went until the Ponderosa Home Development Company bought the property and contributed acreage, the adobe, and funds for restoration to the city through the dedication process.

68. The first plan was to construct a super-structure over the crumbling adobe to preserve it in a state of "arrested decay."

69. But during all this planning the elements were taking their toll at an accelerated rate. The shredded roofing could no longer protect the walls, and in 1977 two of them collapsed.

70. Then the plan was changed and approved by the Recreation Commission and City Council to do a complete and historically accurate restoration of the building to look just as it did in the 1840's.

71. Gilbert Sanchez, architect of the recently restored Peralta Adobe in San Jose, was commissioned to design and supervise the restoration.

72. Before construction could begin, the shambles of the ruined adobe had to be carefully cleaned up. The cleanup crew consisted of the architect, the contractor, Charles Buckley, and three assistants.

73. The architect personally participated in the cleanup and removal of all boards so he could identify each piece that had a historical relationship to the building.

74. These were saved and reused to make the restoration as authentic as possible. And anything new that was used was made to <u>look</u> as authentic as possible. It is difficult to tell, for instance, which of the ceiling beams are brand new and which are 140 years old.

75. After removing the debris, some of the original adobe blocks had to be removed to make way for structural strengthening required to comply with earthquake safety laws.

76. This involved pouring concrete foundations at two corners of the building.

77. Steel reenforcement bars were positioned in these foundations to be attached,

78. To a concrete band poured later around the top of the walls.

79. Meanwhile, new blocks had to be made--some 7500 of them--to replace ruined ones.

80. Adobe making is basically a simple process. The materials are close at hand, namely, dirt and water mixed with straw or whatever plants grow nearby. But the work is backbreaking.

81. Even though the crew had a big advantage over the Californios in using modern machinery to dig, and mix their materials, the physical labor involved is still very hard.

82. Mr. Sanchez, the working architect, had to get up to his elbows in mud to formulate the correct mixture of clay and sandy soil to make the bricks.

83. Next came testing to determine the strength of the blocks.

84. And finally full scale production. A fruit sizer was used to sift the tons of earth.

85. Proper amounts of the ingredients were combined in a mortar mixer.

86. Mud was poured into forms to make blocks 4"x11"x24".

87. Smoothing the mud in the forms was hard work.

88. Blocks were immediately removed from the forms,

89. Covered with straw and left to dry.

90. After partial drying, the blocks were set on edge to dry completely in about a month's time.

91. With the bricks finished and the concrete foundations poured, the process reached a watershed. After months of painstaking preparation, the reconstruction could actually begin.

92. Compared to the months of preliminaries, the walls seemed to go up overnight.

93. Framing for the roof followed.

94. Keeping earthquakes in mind, the crew plated the roof with plywood for extra strength. Shingles cover the plywood from outside view, and the plywood is not visible inside the house because the ceiling hides it.

95. The ceiling joists are redwood; some are old, some are new. They were propped up to sustain the worker's weight during construction.

96. The new ceiling and its rafters were made to look old by an "instant aging process." A sort of paint was made by mixing together pulverized native earth, lime, and water. This concoction was wiped on, allowed to dry and then wiped off.

97. The antiquing formula was also used on almost everything else that had to look original, like the main door,

98. And the candle holders.

99. Both interior and exterior walls were whitewashed to protect and beautify them. The whitewash is simply a mixture of powdered lime and water.

100. Inside, parts of the original walls were left bare of whitewash to be seen as part of the interpretive process. The floor is hard-packed earth just like the original

101. The redwood window frames were outfitted with antique glass for authenticity. However, if any vandalism occurs, they will have to be replaced with new glass instead.

102. The outside stairway leads to what was possibly a sleeping loft and/or storage room. Reconstruction did not include restoring the loft to its original appearance. It is used only for storage and is not open to the public.

103. The door to the stable is equipped with a modern adornment quite unknown when the adobe was new; chicken wire, to keep the pigeons out.

104. Also, unlike its predecessor, the reconstruction has electricity and a telephone hookup. Electrical outlets were included expressly for special events and, less happily, for the intrusion alarm that was installed to thwart would-be vandals.

105. Finally the architect, the contractor, and their crew could stand back and view their handiwork; A real adobe as it might have looked in Gold Rush Days and before.

106. On September 30, 1979 as part of Fremont's Annual Pathfinder's Days Celebration, the Galindo-Higuera Adobe Historical Park was opened to the public.

107. A mariachi band gave spirited assistance.

108. Local historian, John Sandoval, took participants back in time with his description of life in the Ranchero Era.

109. Father William Abeloe, pastor of Mission San Jose, reenacted the traditional house blessing ceremony that was probably performed by one of his predecessors when the home was first built.

110. The people of Fremont, through the instrument of their city government, have brought back from near oblivion a valuable relic of yesterday.

111. Members of the Mission Peak Heritage Foundation and the Washington Township Historical Society have dedicated themselves to interpreting this piece of living history to their friends and neighbors through exhibits and docent-led tours.

112. If this kind of caring can continue, the Galindo-Higuera Adobe will be standing at the foot of Mission Peak 100 years from now.

113. Of course, that's only a blink in the life history of Mission Peak, but by then the adobe will be older than the United States of America is now.

114. Produced by Ohlone College Media Center